

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 6-11, 17-22 and 26 are requested to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1, 12, 23, 25 and 27 are currently being amended.

Claims 29 and 30 have been added.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-5, 12-16, 23-25 and 27-30 are now pending in this application.

Claims 1, 2, 5-13 and 16-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0043311 to Takezawa et al. (hereinafter "Takezawa"). Further, claims 1-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,698,902 to Kawano et al. (hereinafter "Kawano"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Embodiments of the present invention relate to enhancing of contrast in digital projectors. According to the disclosed embodiments, a sealant is provided along the perimeter of a gap along the light path between two optical components. As shown in Figure 3, the sealant is provided along the perimeter and around the light path. Thus, the sealant prevents dust and other pollutants from entering the light path between the two optical components, such as between a DMD cover plate 320 and the TIR prism 330. Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 12, 23 and 27 to more clearly recite this feature of the

invention. Accordingly, claim 1 recites “sealing a perimeter of said gap with a sealant, said sealant being positioned around said light path.” Claims 12, 23 and 27 recite similar features.

By contrast, the cited references fail to teach or suggest this feature of the claimed invention. For example, Takezawa discloses a connecting layer CL positioned between two components. The connecting layer CL of Takezawa is positioned across the entire surface of a polarizer 302Ri. Figure 5 of Takezawa clearly illustrates that the light R passes through the connecting layer CL. Thus, the connecting layer CL is not positioned around the light path. Similarly, Kawano in Figure 3 shows an oil layer 64 positioned across the light path between the cover plate 61 and the prism 50 and not “around said light path.”

Thus, claims 1, 12, 23 and 27 are patentable over the cited references. Further, claims 2-6, 13-17, 24 and 28 depend from one of the allowable claims and are, therefore, patentable for at least that reason as well as for additional patentable features when those claims are considered as a whole.

For example, dependent claim 2 recites “evacuating said gap to provide substantially a vacuum in said gap.” Dependent claims 13, 24 and 28 recite a similar feature. The office action asserts that Takezawa illustrates this feature with the connecting layer CL in Figure 5. However, it is clear that the layer CL does not constitute a vacuum. Takezawa fails to show how a vacuum could be maintained within the layer CL and does not teach or suggest the evacuation of the gap. Similarly, the office action asserts that Kawano discloses a vacuum in the gap in Figure 3. Again, Kawano fails to teach or suggest the evacuation of the gap.

Independent claim 25 has been amended to recite a “gap having one of air and a substantial vacuum therein.” As noted above, the cited references fail to teach or suggest a gap having a substantial vacuum therein. Further, neither of the references teaches or suggests a gap having air therein. Therefore, claim 25 is patentable. Claim 26 depends from allowable claim 25 and is patentable for at least that reason, as well as for additional patentable features when that claim is considered as a whole.

New claims 29 and 30 have been added. Claims 29 and 30 depend from allowable claims 1 and 12, respectively, and are therefore patentable for at least that reason. Support for

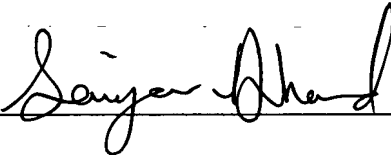
the subject matter of claims 29 and 30 can be found in the original specification at paragraph 0017.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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